June 23, 2017

When you
Desire nothing,
You have all
That you desire.

This is peace.

+++

What is my prayer rule?
It is unceasingly to pray the Jesus prayer.
"Lord Jesus Christ, son of God,
Have mercy on me!"
I hurl this prayer into the flaming heart of Jesus and let Him decide what suffering soul needs it most. I don't tell God what to do.
In the enormous calculus of human suffering and pain, my Christ knows better than I how my prayers will, in some mysterious, mystical way lighten the weight.
Therefore, though I am now an invalid and bound to the cross given me to bear, I am a pilgrim of Christ wandering with him over the face of human suffering and lifting the burden by means of my ceaseless prayer.

This prayer lights my way. Its shadow is cast not only over all suffering mankind but also includes the suffering of all creatures, even the tiniest mite. It extends also to the wilting petal of a weed, as well as the glorious bloom of a rose.
It is a prayer that knits together the entire universe in a song of harmonious love.

+++
When my soul
Is filled with tears,
Then it is
That I feel Christ's presence
Because His face is reflected in each drop.

+++
The harp strings
Of my soul
Glisten with
The melody of tears.

June 24, 2017

The ray of light
that is Christ
pierces the darkness
of my soul.
On the wings
of ceaseless prayer,
it soars forth
to touch
the sufferings
of all who weep.
My soul
becomes a pilgrim
of His light
and, as lightning shoots
towards water,
my soul is drawn
to the glistening tears
that water the earth
of so many sorrows.

+++

Light of Christ, tear asunder the fear that is the garment of my soul at this moment. Transfigure the terror into joy in your presence. Mend the tatters, patch the holes of my soul so that my soul is made whole by your cross of love. Let my soul know that truth only is born in the womb of suffering.

+++

I have spent my life searching for truth. Now, in my old age, weakened by the ravages of unrepentant disease, truth has found me and made His home amidst the debris of the years. Christ is the tenant; His light, love, and mercy the "rent" – payment in full. The soul's tenant is Christ, but it is the soul that lives in Him. Entering into Christ, He enters into my soul: We become One.

+++

My soul lives in the light of Christ through prayer. By "prayer" I do not mean prayer with words. Instead, my soul prays through silence and in silence. Silently, rhythmically, motion within motionlessness, my fingers move from knot to knot of my prayer rope. His presence is not in the knots but in the spaces between the

knots—in the silent sighs of my soul, in the blinking of the eyes of my soul turned upwards to the inward depths of Christ. The silence is His presence.

+++

The beauty of God
Manifests
throughout
all creation
Even is it
more present still
in the
little tear
that is
born
from
frozen fear.

HOPE
Is the
BLOOM
Of
ETERNITY.

Enclosed
Is a little
BUD
Of a
SOUL—

May it
FLOWER
Into a
SILENCE
Of
LIGHT—

In the
DIAMOND
CHALICE
Of all
souls—

ETERNALLY.

"Thank you"
Is a little thread
Unravelling
From the hem
Of my soul
Threaded
Through the
Needle of God.

Time
is but
a small fold
in the vastness
of eternity—
judge
everything
in the
light
of the
eternal.

When stripped
of everything
think
of those
shadowy eyes
open
in the
center
of your soul
and fixed on things
that are
beyond all words,
for the kingdom of God
is
within you.

Tears
Are
the blood
of our
souls.

Make
your soul
a
monstrance
of
truth.

Suffering
is the
matrix of truth.
The veneer
of the soul
is stripped
to a nakedness.
It is the
prayer of a soul
that stretches
to God
in a
stuttering embrace.

The Manger of a Soul

In a moment
of prayer,
The instant
explodes
Into Eternity:
A Divine Infinity,
In the manger
Of the soul.

Christ,
The Living Flame
of love,
Scorches the soul,
With a
consuming beauty,
A bright darkness,
Both humble and absolute.

"The Tear Drop of Eternity"

My Soul
Clings
To the
Tear Drop
Of Eternity
In joyous
Surrender
To His
Divine Will.

Tears
are the
"kiss"
of hope
on this
dark pilgrim way
leading
to the
summit of Tabor
and
transfigured
grace.

Friday
6-12-15

"And now, Lord,
What is there to wait for?
In you rests all my hope."
(Ps. 39)

In my soul is a torrent of thorns hurling me into the abyss of despair. In God alone does my soul find rest. He alone is my joy.
I cling to His Hope as a drowning man clings to a raft as the waves threaten to hurl him into the depths of the sea.
God, strengthen my soul to endure and to find my nourishment in the food of your will. In the present moment the food has a bitterness that burns, nay scorches, leaving me but a heap of ashes.

My mind falters; thoughts stick, refusing to move to completion. It is as if my brain and body have run out of oil, creaking to a frightening halt. What has happened to a mind that once was graced with the facility to express itself with clarity? All is cobwebs and each day the spider spins its web with greater urgency and dexterity. God now is the lamp unto my feet.

Crushed in this "place of sorrows", My God, help me!

July 1, 2015

Wednesday

"Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you girded yourself and walked where you would; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish to go" (This he said to show by what death he was to glorify God.) And after this he said to him, "Follow me."
John 21:18-19

This scripture passage echoes through the corridors of my soul during my final moments on this earth. I "do not wish to go" into the flames of suffering. He is "girding me" with strength as I "stretch out my hands" in prayer. I will accept His invitation to "follow" after Him— He will be the "lamp for my feet" and the "light" to guide me home.

My days are structured around prayer. Prayer is the "anchor of my soul". The daily routine is then augmented by tending to hygienic chores (hair and body cleaning), preparing meals, eating, exercising, and bowel movements! All of this depletes me of enormous amounts of energy---or, more aptly stated, depletes me of the minimal reservoirs of energy still available.

My upper abdomen causes unbearable discomfort. As soon as I eat— even the smallest amount—I feel bloated, swollen.

I pray my time on this earth's "rack" not be extended much longer. I surrender to your will, My God! ---BUT turn an ear my way and extend your hand to lead me beyond this darkness into the radiance of your light.

6-8-15

Yeats:
"Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold"

This line from Yeats' "Second Coming" has been echoing down the hollows of my soul all morning today. I feel so completely uncentered as if "all things" have fallen apart. Whatever was the "center" of my life suddenly "cannot hold".

It is a strange sensation of being out of focus—mentally and physically. Though I have never been in a drunken stupor, induced by excessive alcoholic consumption, I imagine what I am experiencing must bear a remarkable similitude to that state of disorientation.

I have, however, known the inebriation of joy upon the discovery of an idea, the image of a beauty, transcendent and ethereal, revealed to my soul in a painting, a poem, or a musical piece. It is the inebriation of the ephemeral when seen from the perspective of a spiritual precipice.

Such tidbits of this passing landscape are sufficient sustenance until one catapults over the edge and, falling into the abyss, confronts the entirety of one's own nothingness. The cruel brutality of that encounter cannot be described. It can only be felt by others who have known life in the abyss. Then there is no need to falter toward description. One crosses the territory over a bridge of silence, embracing the other in a terrifying clasp of recognition.

The ephemeral, the transitory, now I see, was the "food" that fed my hungry soul. My soul's repast is now His Will—a "fiat" of total abandonment into the arms of God. I pray that my soul be strong and not be crushed by the weight.

5/11/15

Today my soul has descended into the emptiness of its nakedness. All is utter darkness. The light of hope is quenched. My trembling hand reaches out to touch (what?)—nothingness. And yet…I know He is within me. He shines in the night of my soul brighter than the "noonday sun". In fact, the blackness is a mirror of his radiance, for do we not know that "he is a hidden God"?

The Skies of my Tears:

The autumn leaves
Fall
from the skies
Of my tears
Into heaps
of fears
In the corner
Of my soul.
The match is
Prayer.

The Scaffold of Pain:

The Mystery of Suffering
Is only understood
By the weary soul's
Ascension to
The scaffold
Of Pain.

The Crucible of Perfection:

Only in the
Crucible of suffering
Is the soul
Made perfect.

I
Offer
my suffering
as a
prayer.

Suffering
is the most
eloquent
and also
the most
powerful prayer
because
in the silence
of the soul
each moment
is sanctified.

Wednesday
6-10-15

"Why are you cast down, my soul?
Why groan within me?"
"Hope in God."
Ps. 43

My soul is filled with a paralysis of anguish. "Out of the depths" of despair, I call to you, My God! Hear my prayer and deliver me from the fears that imprison my every breath.
Within the cloister of my own soul, I seek refuge.
In patient hope, My God, I wait patiently. Behind the lattices of silence, my soul shrieks.
Anchor my soul in your truth, beyond the fascination of passing joys. But only give me the strength, the humility, the depth of love to say "yes" to your Will, moment by moment.
Let not hope and trust in your mercy fail me.

I am living in a body that is foreign to me. This mystic casket of my soul seems to be stolen from me—cell by cell. My vision is unfocused. My brain feels as if an impenetrable, thick, black fog has cloaked it and thought struggles to clear away the debris in order to find a mooring.
I'm becoming terrifyingly uncoordinated, awkward, slow. Ideas cannot find words to express them; my speech falters.
The fatigue is leaden—I sink under its weight.
All of this takes getting used to for me who was just a short while ago so energetic and embraced each moment with boundless joy.
Launch my soul from this earth soon, My God. I find no dwelling here that brings purpose to my moments or even a vestige of comfort.

The swelling in my abdomen is an unrelenting burden.

Prayer, meditation on the word of God, must be the foundation of my days. I feel called to be an embodiment of silent prayer in the noisy tumult of this world. The ears of my soul hear Him calling me to this convent in my soul. "Here I am, Lord! Do with me according to your will!" Fiat!

Suffering
is the
unceasing prayer
that
echoes
throughout
the
universe.

A Psalter of Tears

"Jesus wept."

Each
tear
is a
note
in the
symphony
of His
love.

+++

In
each
Tear
is an
infinite
heaven.

+++

In
every
tear
is the
face
of
God.

+++

There
Is
A
Sermon
In
A
Tear.

+++

Tears
are the
paving stones
to
eternity.

+++

God
lives
and
breathes
and
has
His being
in a
tear.

+++

A
tear

is the
spark
of a
soul.

The Gift of a Tear:
Sparks of a Soul

"Jesus Wept."
(John 11:35)

I am a 71 year old woman, blessed with the "gift" of Parkinson's Disease. In the terrible terror of the months following diagnosis, I lived in benumbed incredulity. The disparity between what I was and what I was becoming, shrouded every moment of prayer.

The EWTN Mass became the pivot of each day, along with the Divine Office and rosary. When my body seemed too frail or frightened to breathe one more breath, I began to "breathe" prayer.

As tears so frequently overflowed my eyes, "becoming my bread by day and night" (Ps 42), I was drawn repeatedly to the shortest verse in scripture: "Jesus wept!" (John 11:35)

The tears of Christ became for me a transcendent mystery. In my loneliness and terror, I found Christ in a tear.

Tears are sparks of a soul that longs for the infinite. Each tear became for my troubled soul a shadow of eternity. In other moments, my tears seemed to become living icons of the heart of Christ.

In the tossings of the night, my tears became the emanation of His divine splendor.
Over time, I started to have "new eyes" to see my afflictions as gifts of His mercy and love. After months of "blindness", He gave me "to see"!

I began to see the entire universe through the tears of Christ. Everywhere I looked all became transfigured through the lens of His tears. Rather than images being distorted, all was bathed in a crystal clarity. I saw the lucidity of sorrow. I saw through the opacity of pain.

My eyes beheld the horizon of truth hidden beneath the anguish of screams.

Your homilies and devout reverential celebration of Mass and thoughtful homilies has been blessings on my journey to finding peace in God's will.

Enclosed is a spark of my soul—a tear of thanksgiving, of joy and gratitude for the graces of your priesthood.

Tears became my prayers—a way of praying ceaselessly.
--like incense rising to the throne of God.

I hear the cries of the universe in tears.
Acoustics of tears
A symphony of tears

To see the world through His tears

I hear His void in every tear—here, there, and everywhere. I hear His voice in every tear.

He whispers everywhere where there is fear.

A gift of a Tear
Jesus Wept"

Psalm: 42
Tears have become my bread by day and night

Hope in God.

Tears fall from Jesus Crucified flooding my soul.

Signed,
Christ in a tear,
Joyce

God is everywhere in a tear.

Mystery

In every tear, "follow me!"
In each tear is the singing of a soul, of all souls, the song of the presence of God.

In each tear the Divine splendor shines forth.

Each tear is the inner temple of God.
In the eternal silence of a tear, He is present.

Is 5:4-3
Treasures of darkness

Light of the cross
Lamp of Christ
Passing vanity of all earthly things
Splendor of a human soul
Suffering gives light to the eyes to see

Jesus Wept
John 11:35

In a tear is a soul that longs for the infinite.

In each tear is the moving shadow of eternity.

In each tear is the living icon of the heart of Christ.

To write to Father JP:

A gift of tears:
Tears are the sparks of the soul.

Caverns of the soul—washed by God's seas
In this valley of tears—hope is our lantern that gives us courage to endure.—trust in God
The sunrise of eternity: the sunset of mortality

Her soul flowers to the beauty of perfection in love

"But there are also many other things which Eleanor (sic) did; were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written." (John 21:25)

The precariousness of health

I should bend and bow in carrying my neighbor with his cross, and in bowing and bending I spiritually form the horizontal line, the humbling line of the cross, in order that the one whom I carry may form the vertical line as I carry him on my shoulders.

By transfiguring the world through the response of a will wholly given to God

No one can escape the cross on this earth. One must see God through it/

She has the love of God in her and who thus has love for every person---that love which is an imperishable and inexhaustible reality.

A greater joy than all the joys which the things of this world can procure..

The cross makes the world transparent for God.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock" (Rev. 3:20)

An ineffable light

The spirit of Christ enflames her soul with love

Immersed in the abyss of his grace
In the profound simplicity of her humility

Is 5:4-3
Treasures of darkness

Light of the cross
Lamp of Christ
Passing vanity of all earthly things
Splendor of a human soul
Suffering gives light to the eyes to see

The Blessings of Tears
A Canticle to Tears

"Jesus wept..."

Tears fall from the skies of our pain.

A tear is the inner eye of love.

Ascend a tear and touch truth.

Tears are the silent music of prayer.

Tears are icons written by the finger of God.

In every tear is etched the will of God.

Out of the womb of fear is born a tear.

Every tear is a little Eucharist.

A tear is a requiem sung by sorrow.

Tears perfect one in suffering.

In the center of a tear lives Hope.

In a tear Behold the Man.

Each tear is the transfiguration.

Tears of light.
In each tear a living flame of love.
In each tear a drop of His blood.
In each tear "Thy will be done!"
Tears-Sunday 11/15/15

A tear is the wound of sorrow.

In each tear is the light of an angel.

In each tear echoes "I thirst"

Each tear is a chalice of mercy.

I see the world through the tears of Christ.

In each tear, Do not fear; for I am with you."

In each tear the will of God.

In each tear the voice of God.

Intro:
I see the world and all its events through the tears of God. His tears are the lens of the eyes of my soul.

The life of a Christian is nothing but a perpetual struggle against self; there is no flowering of the soul to the beauty of its perfection except at the price of pain"

The psalmist assures the forlorn soul that He keeps a record of our tears. I prefer the translation that He puts all our tears in a bottle.
The Orthodox custom is to have an empty bottle passed around at a funeral into which the tears of the mourners are collected. The bottle of tears is then presented as a sacred memorial of the deceased.

I have a variation on the "Bottle of tears" theme: I prefer to think that He "bottles" our tears to allow the enduring beauty of His light to transfigure each little tear into a jewel of His mercy and love. Each tear is transformed into a benedictory prayer. I have been filling the vases of tears to the very brim. As night descends in my soul, it is these jewels of tears that light my way.

Dear Elizabeth:

The simplicity and truth of your thoughts are an affirmation of the profound depths and unparalleled beauty of your soul. I am continually humbled by your willingness to allow me to peer into the caverns of your soul—both in moments of tranquility as well as moments of tossing and turning.

To be angry with God when adverse circumstances threaten to destroy challenges one to accommodate adversity into a synthesis of Christian belief. Anger, per se, is a syntactic "dagger" thrust into the ontological hope to which the cross of Christ points. His cross is the anchor of the soul in the violent tempest. To it the soul clings as to a raft and is caught up in the mystery of His light, radiant and pure.

Even when life's events resemble "a roller coaster ride through a burning fireworks factory" the journey contains an infinity of "little heavens" along the way of ascent (mental) or descent (spiritual).

Heaven is present in the splendor of every human soul, was well as in each tear that fountains from the clouds of earthly trials. There are treasures in the darkness. The passing vanity of contingent earthly things gifts us with the strength to see the light of the cross and the lamp of Christ as anchors amidst the turbulence.

Heaven is all around us because Christ pervades all existence. We can never be where He is not. All that happens then is GIFT, is GRACE! Each trial is an invitation to unite our will with His will and to be transfigured in mystical surrender. In the manifestation of the transfigured soul is the peace and beauty for which we search.

The way out of moments of pervading gloom (predictive or otherwise), moments of "quiet desperation", is resolved by the admonition: "Be Led". "He leadeth me..." are words that echo in the perturbations of our souls when the "chink of the soul's armor" is breeched and the militia of fears begins its relentless invasion. To see all things as the manifestation of His Divine Will and to allow our souls to float as a feather on the breath of God is the safest harbor in the tempest.

The "paralysis of fear" is nurtured in the "womb of fear" only when its conception is "unknown". Fear feeds on the unknown. Making conjectures or projections into the future possibilities and ramifications is fraught with present peril. Conceptions most often are deceptions. "Be Led" in the moment by His will, without seeking definition or purpose in the present tempest.

The humility of your assertions ("I'm whining!") and the gratitude for God's gifts that you acknowledge are salvific graces that garland your soul. I know of no other mortal whose soul is enrobed in the radiance of His light as is yours. It is a cherished gift for which I feel unworthy.

I tossed and turned most of last night trying to discern the mysteries of your soul and the coming to terms with moments of "quiet desperation" that I, too, confess to experiencing.

I feel I am dangling at the edge of a precipice. I am looking forward to the plunge with avid anticipation. During the moments that it took to write this letter, my right arm and hand cramped into a terrifying paralysis. I've never had that occur before. The deterioration of my physical and mental capacities has been progressive and startling.

It requires concentrated energy to move and to think. It has become an exhaustive "adventure" into a new way of being present on this journey. This, too, is a gift of His grace: My soul now explores unmapped territory and treks along trails with thorns and thistles. Yet, there are moments of extraordinary beauty that shod my soul to amble through perils as when a bird chirps!

Yesterday, my silence was abruptly invaded with a canticle of musical chirps. "Chirp, chirp, chirp-glad to meet cha!" A chestnut-sided warbler was clinging to my bay window screen. Our eyes met! This beautiful feathered image of God delighted me! Being unfamiliar with this kind of visitor, I referenced my bird book. Thus I identified visitor and also listened to an audio of his melodious chirp. I read that most people hear his concluding chirps as "glad to meet cha!".

I then returned his greeting: "Glad to meet cha, too!" Then this many-splendored feathered thing fluttered away!

Doves visited my Dad a few days prior to his soul's launching. I wondered if this cheerful visitor was sent as a herald to lead my soul to eternity! What a perfect escort!

I have known a flood of tears too frequently lately. The hues of Autumn (my favorite season) fill my soul with an unexpected sadness. I have intimations of my mortality in each falling leaf and with that emotion is the awareness of the imminence of my departure. So many expectations and desires left with threads still to be sewn into the fabric of dreams. The cloth of a life often unravels into a moth-eaten thing--a ragged patch work of a design etched by futile groans.

The psalmist assures the forlorn soul that He keeps a record of our tears. I prefer the translation that He puts all our tears in a bottle.
The Orthodox custom is to have an empty bottle passed around at a funeral into which the tears of the mourners are collected. The bottle of tears is then presented as a sacred memorial of the deceased.

I have a variation on the "Bottle of tears" theme: I prefer to think that He "bottles" our tears to allow the enduring beauty of His light to transfigure each little tear into a jewel of His mercy and love. Each tear is transformed into a benedictory prayer. I have been filling the vases of tears to the very brim. As night descends in my soul, it is these jewels of tears that light my way.

It is a remarkable kenotic love and self-giving that makes of your presence in my life (and the lives of all the students you have undoubtedly "touched") a treasure in the "darkling" plains of these arid wastelands.

I will look for you in eternity and will know your soul among all the others by the radiance of its light—steadfast and certain. Oh!The happy day to be disembodied and free at last!

I pray urgently that the present challenges have not dimmed the light that "leadeth you."

When our souls are heavy with the weight of oppressive weariness, one can find a modicum of solace in such lines as these from George Herbert's "The Pulley". When weariness dwarfs all other impulses of the soul, He pulls us to Himself to rest in His peace. Let us surrender our souls to His "pulley" of love.

THE PULLEY

When God at first made man,
Having a glass of blessings standing by -
"Let us," said he, "pour on him all we can:
Let the world's riches, which dispersed lie,
Contract into a span."

So strength first made a way,
Then beauty flowed, then wisdom, honor, pleasure
When almost all was out, God made a stay,
Perceiving that, alone of all his treasure,
Rest in the bottom lay.

"For if I should," said he,
"Bestow this jewel also on my creature,
He would adore my gifts instead of me,
And rest in nature, not the God of nature:
So both should losers be.

"Yet let him keep the rest,
But keep them with repining restlessness;
Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
May toss him to my breast."

George Herbert
1593-1633

Tenderly in His love,

Joyce

Dear Harry:
The simplicity and truth of your thoughts are an affirmation of the profound depths and unparalleled beauty of your soul. I am continually humbled by your willingness to allow me to peer into its caverns.

Some thoughts:

On Heaven:
The scenario presented by your Indian boss challenged me to accommodate this reversal of earth-heaven into a synthesis of Christian belief. It is a syntactic "dagger" thrust into the ontological
hope to which the cross of Christ points.

My attempts to provide a logical counter thrust to this provocative observation led me (1) to acknowledge that it is Heaven all the way to eternity, and (2) to ponder the implications of this continuum for the journey of a soul to God.

The pilgrim soul, following in the footprints of Christ, views Heaven, both as a destination and as a continuum. It is not a place but a state of being wrapped in the mystery of the unfathomable light of Christ, radiant and pure.

Even when life's events resemble "a roller coaster ride through a burning fireworks factory" (indelible metaphor that only My Harry could coin!!!), the journey contains an infinity of "little heavens" along the way of ascent (mental) or descent (spiritual).

Heaven is present in the splendor of every human soul, was well as in each tear that fountains from the clouds of earthly trials. There are treasures in the darkness. The passing vanity of contingent earthly things gifts us with the strength to see the light of the cross and the lamp of Christ as anchors amidst the turbulence.

Heaven is all around us because Christ pervades all existence. We can never be where He is not. All that happens then is GIFT, is GRACE! Each trial is an invitation to unite our will with His will and to be transfigured in mystical surrender. In the manifestation of the transfigured soul is the peace and beauty for which we search.

On "Quiet Desperation":
The way out of moments of pervading gloom (predictive or otherwise), moments of "quiet desperation", is resolved by the admonition: "Be Led". "He leadeth me..." are words that echo in the perturbations of our souls when the "chink of the soul's armor" is breeched and the militia of fears begins its relentless invasion. To see all things as the manifestation of His Divine Will and to allow our souls to float as a feather on the breath of God is the safest harbor in the tempest.

The "paralysis of fear" is nurtured in the "womb of fear" only when its conception is "unknown". Fear feeds on the unknown. Making conjectures or projections into the future possibilities and ramifications of the divorce proceedings is fraught with present peril. Conceptions most often are deceptions. "Be Led" in the moment by His will, without seeking definition or purpose in the present tempest.

The humility of you assertions ("if I were smarter") and the gratitude for God's gifts are salvific graces that garland your soul. I know of no other mortal whose soul is enrobed in the radiance of His light as is yours. It is a cherished gift for which I feel unworthy.

I tossed and turned most of last night trying to discern the mysteries of Heaven and the coming to terms with moments of "quiet desperation" that I, too, confess to experiencing.

I feel I am dangling at the edge of a precipice. I am looking forward to the plunge with avid anticipation. During the moments that it took to write this letter, my right arm and hand cramped into a terrifying paralysis. I've never had that occur before. The deterioration of my physical and mental capacities has been progressive and startling.

It requires concentrated energy to move and to think. It has become an exhaustive "adventure" into a new way of being present on this journey.

My right hand tremored most of the night in rhythm with a fluttering in my heart. I focused on the pulsations of His light flooding my soul with a tidal wave of joy.

I have known a flood of tears too frequently lately. The hues of Autumn (my favorite season) fill my soul with an unexpected sadness. I have intimations of my mortality in each falling leaf and with that emotion is the awareness of the imminence of my departure. So many expectations and desires left with threads still to be sewn into the fabric of dreams. The cloth of a life often unravels into a moth-eaten thing--a ragged patch work of a design etched by futile groans.

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I have a variation on the "Bottle of tears" theme: I prefer to think that He "bottles" our tears to allow the enduring beauty of His light to transfigure each little tear into a jewel of His mercy and love. Each tear is transformed into a benedictory prayer. I have been filling the vases of tears to the very brim. As night descends in my soul, it is these jewels of tears that light my way.

The glass nativity is an objective correlative of the love you have for Christ. You articulate, with characteristic eloquence, the multiple levels of its significance for you. It is, indeed, a manifestation of your Christic presence to others. It is that kenotic love and self-giving that

makes of your presence in my life (and the lives of all you touch) a treasure in the "darkling" plains of these arid wastelands.

I will look for you in eternity and will know your soul among all the others by the radiance of its light—steadfast and certain. Oh!The happy day to be disembodied and free at last!

I pray urgently that the challenges at Temple today have not dimmed the light that "leadeth you."

Tenderly in His love,

Joyce

November 22, 2015

The Solemnity of
Our Lord Jesus Christ
King of the Universe

Joyce Surman
25 Winthrop Drive
Manalapan, NJ 07726

To Father John Paul,

A Tabernacle of Tears:
Sparks of a Soul

"Jesus Wept."
(John 11:35)

I am a seventy-one year old lady, home bound, living alone with the Alone, who has been blessed with Parkinson's disease. In the terrible terror of the months following diagnosis, I lived in benumbed incredulity. The disparity between what I was and the predictive inevitability of what I was becoming, shrouded every moment of prayer.

My soul was crushed in a universe of interrogatives: Why? Why this particular cross? Anything but this one! Why even continue to live?

I felt my soul
being pushed
to the precipice
of nothingness.

My soul
was consumed
in a holocaust
of fear.

All that defined me was mercilessly being transformed into a vast pyre of dry twigs to which a hand unbeknownst to me was striking a match, setting all aflame.

My soul
Ignited
into an immense
conflagration.

My soul was scorched.
"Corpses" lay all around me:
"Corpses" of hopes.
"Corpses" of dreams.
"Corpses" of all that was to be.

My soul
was stripped
to a nakedness
clothed
in the scarlet robes
of terror.

My soul could surrender,
be consumed,
and embrace annihilation,
or it could arise from the ashes
like a Pelican
or soar
on eagle's wings aloft
beyond the skies of my pain
and the paralysis of bewilderment.

Perhaps my soul was being invited to both a

surrendering
and a
consummation.

Each tear then became an icon of the crucifixion:

a surrender
to the Father's will
and a
"consummatum est"
of the final benediction.

The EWTN Mass became my soul's still point; your homilies the fulcrum upon which my soul found a harbor of equanimity. When my soul grasped for meaning, it found food for

its sustenance at the table of your words. In the darkness, your reverent celebration of Mass led my soul to see the Light of His truth shining in the present moment.

The Mass
Became
the port
of my pain.

As tears so frequently overflowed my eyes, "becoming my bread by day and night" (Ps 42), I was drawn repeatedly to the shortest verse in scripture: "Jesus wept!" (John 11:35)

I began to see that the tears of Christ were stretching into the infinite caverns of my soul.
They are sparks
of pure divine light.

I saw
in the
chapel of my soul
a brilliant tabernacle
of crystal tears
like tiny consecrated Eucharists
falling
falling
from His
weeping eyes.

Each tear became for me food for prayer.
My soul fed at the banquet of Weeping Tears.

Now, the tears of Christ became for my soul, not only a transcendent mystery, but also a perfect way of prayer. In my loneliness and terror, my soul now found Christ where He had not been before visible.

My soul
now was Led
to journey
to the heart
of prayer
in the
cargo ship
of a
fragile tear.

Tears became
sparks of my soul
longing in travail
for the infinite.

Each tear
Became for my
tormented soul
a passing shadow
of eternity.

In other moments,
my tears
seemed to become
living icons
of the heart
of Christ.

Arising
on the pinions
of my soul,
I nested
in His cries.

In the torment
of the night,
the tears
of my soul
became
the emanation
of His divine splendor.

The night was no more;
instead it was transfigured
by a darkness that is bright.

Cresting
in the ascension
of His refulgent light.

After a period of several months, I started to have "new eyes" to see my afflictions as gifts of His mercy and love. After months of "blindness", He gave me sight!

My soul
began to see
the entire universe
through the tears of Christ.

Everywhere
the eyes of my soul
turned,
all was seen
as transfigured
when seen
through the lens
of His tears.

Rather than images being distorted,
all became bathed
in a crystal clarity,
a purity shone forth
from the center of things.

My soul saw
the lucidity of sorrow.
My soul saw through
the opacity of pain.
The eyes of my soul beheld
the horizon of truth
hidden beneath
the anguish of screams.

The ears of my soul
listened to tears
falling all around.

My soul heard His voice
in every tear:
here,
there
and everywhere.

He whispers
Everywhere
where there is fear.

In every tear,
the ears of my soul heard
"Follow me!"

God is everywhere
His abode is in every tear.

Tears are the radiance of His garment.

Touch the hem of a tear
and the power of faith
pours forth
with its healing balm
of superabundant graces.

"Who is it that has touched me?"
"It is I, Lord, a fragile tear, a spark of my soul!"
"Touch then and be made whole",
He said.

In my soul there is born
an apocalypse of joy.

My soul now sees tears are sacred.

Tears
Are
Sparks
of a soul.

Each tear
is a tiny chapel
in which
He weeps.

In the eternal silence
of a tear,
my soul
sings a melody
of His presence,
of His peace.

My soul now has become a vagabond of tears,

a hobo
riding
a cargo ship
to the frontiers
of eternity.

All the tears
Collected
in my soul's sack,
continuously pour
into the golden chalice
of His mercy:
sacrificial offerings
To a God who weeps
in the Tabernacles of
every soul.

Our souls are surrounded by a symphony of tears.

A sermon in a tear.
Tears of living flames of His love.
Tears stained scarlet with His drops of blood.
Fiat tears: "Thy will be done!"

Each tear a resounding thunderous echo:

"I thirst!"

When a soul
sees the world through
the weeping eyes of Christ,
it stands atop Mt. Tabor.
All becomes transfiguration.

My soul discovered
in the "weeping Christ"
the entire Gospel
written in tears:
of faith,
of hope,
and of love.

The tears of Christ are my tears.
The tears of Christ are your tears.
The tears of Christ are the world's tears.

Christ weeps in us,
with us,
and for us.
We never weep alone.

For in the weeping Christ
we live
and move
and have our being.

All tears flow
Flooding the plains
Of our souls
into the vast ocean
of His mercy.

When my soul
sees the world
through the tears of Christ,
it hears a requiem
sung by sorrow.

Sorrow
forges a soul
to perfection
in a tear
whose center
is Hope.

Your homilies and devout reverential celebration of Mass have been blessings on my journey to finding peace in God's will.

Enclosed is a gift of a tear, a spark of my soul—a tear that touches the frontiers of eternity. It is a tear offered in thanksgiving, joy and gratitude for the abundant graces of your priesthood.
Please pray for me as I continue to pray for you.

In the tears of Christ,

Joyce Surman

Harry, enclosed is the gift of a tear, a spark of my soul, that touches the frontiers of eternity.

I hear
His voice
in every
tear.

He
Whispers
everywhere
where there
is
fear.

A
gift
of a
Tear
"Jesus Wept"

Psalm: 42
Tears have become my bread by day and night
Hope in God.

Tears
Fall
from
Jesus Crucified
Flooding
my soul.

Signed,
Christ in a tear,
Joyce

God
is
everywhere
in a
tear.

Mystery:
In every tear,
"follow me!"

I hear
His voice
in every tear
—here,
there,
and
everywhere.

In the husk
of a tear
The mind is
Suspended in God
Tasting the Joys
of Eternal sweetness.

Phrases

Caverns of the soul—washed by God's seas
In this valley of tears—hope is our lantern that gives us courage to endure.—trust in God
The sunrise of eternity: the sunset of mortality

Her soul flowers to the beauty of perfection in love

"But there are also many other things which Eleanor (sic) did; were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written." (John 21:25)

The precariousness of health

I should bend and bow in carrying my neighbor with his cross, and in bowing and bending I spiritually form the horizontal line, the humbling line of the cross, in order that the one whom I carry may form the vertical line as I carry him on my shoulders.

By transfiguring the world through the response of a will wholly given to God

No one can escape the cross on this earth. One must see God through it/

She has the love of God in her and who thus has love for every person---that love which is an imperishable and inexhaustible reality.

A greater joy than all the joys which the things of this world can procure..

The cross makes the world transparent for God.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock" (Rev. 3:20)

An ineffable light

The spirit of Christ enflames her soul with love

Immersed in the abyss of his grace
In the profound simplicity of her humility

Is 5:4-3
Treasures of darkness

Light of the cross
Lamp of Christ
Passing vanity of all earthly things
Splendor of a human soul
Suffering gives light to the eyes to see

Pushed into nothingness

A spark of pure divine light

The white radiance of eternity

In the chapel of my soul is a tabernacle
In it Jesus weeps.

His tears are Eucharists

Each tear is a prayer.

Pray without ceasing.

To Father JP:
A Soul's Song of Thanksgiving

Interrogative universe: wh? Why this particular cross? Anything but this one! Why even live? ---a holocaust of tears

Make of them sacrificial offerings to God.

I listen and I hear tears falling all around.
Each tear utters an apocalypse of joy.

Tears are sacred—sparks of a soul.

A tear is a little chapel of His heart.

A Litany of Tears
The Blessings of Tears
A Canticle to Tears

"Jesus wept…"

Tears
Fall
from the skies
of our pain.

A tear
is the
inner eye
of love.

Ascend
a tear
and
touch truth.

Tears
Are
the silent music
of prayer.

Tears
are icons
written
by the
finger of God.

In
every
Tear
is etched
the will
of God.

Out
of the
womb of fear
is born
a tear.

Every
Tear
Is
a little
Eucharist.

Commented [js1]:

A tear
is a
requiem
sung
by
sorrow.

Tears
perfect one
in suffering.

In the center
of a tear
lives Hope.

In a tear
Behold
the Man.

Each tear
is the
transfiguration.

Pushed
to the edge
of nothingess,
No more
the toys of toys
to which we have clung,
a spark of the soul appears—
a tear-
and God is there.
Is everywhere.

Tears-Sunday 11/15/15

A tear
is the
wound
of sorrow.

In each tear
is the light
of an angel.

In each tear
Echoes
"I thirst"

Each tear
is a
chalice
of mercy.

I see
the world
through the tears
of Christ.

In each tear,
"Do not fear;
for I am with you."

In each tear
the will of God.

In each tear
the voice of God.

I see the world
and all its events
through the tears of God.
His tears are the lens
of the eyes of my soul.

Dearest Harry,

My soul is strengthened knowing that in the banquet of your prayers there is hope eternal. That your soul is stretching towards joyous horizons gives me comfort in my weakness.

I had the gutters cleaned yesterday. When I began to write out the check, my hand tremored in a paralysis of pain. The man willingly filled it out for me.

The moment transfigured into a sword that wounded my soul. Is this the suffering unto truth to which Christ calls each soul that beckons to His invitation to "Follow me"? It was an epiphanic moment: The soul is brought to truth, not in joy, but in suffering. Suffering strips the veneer off the ragged edges of reality. The contours of life become defined and the predication of each breath is prayer.

Paralysis is spreading throughout my limbs—even my eyes get locked in a fixed gaze. I think of my new mode of being as an existential stasis! It is just a momentary blip, a little wrinkle, on the face of time.

It will all be ironed out soon by the will of God.

Love and many blessings,

Joyce

On Paralysis in my Hand

The moment
transfigured
into a sword
that wounded
my soul.

Is this
the suffering
unto truth
to which
Christ calls
each soul
that beckons
to His invitation
to "Follow me"?

It was
an epiphanic moment:
The soul
is brought
to truth,
not in joy,
but in suffering.
Suffering
strips the veneer
off the ragged edges
of reality.

The contours of life
become defined
and the
predication of each breath
is prayer.

When the flesh
contorts
In a paralysis of pain,
All fugitive shadows
of the world
Sparkle
into the brightness
of eternity

From the
womb of truth,
As from
an existential abyss,
A splendor is born.
The soul
then enters
into God's will
In the silence
and solitude
of prayer.

It is
the soul
that is
the place of prayer.
God
dwells
within
in
eternal silence.

Cradled
in the
arms of suffering,
(The cross of His mystery),
My soul
Stretches
to the
infinity of silence.

June 25,2017

The flame in my soul is fanned into leaping sparks by the unceasing Jesus Prayer. The flames stretch upwards to the flames consuming the heart of Christ. There in that cauldron of light, love and mercy, the flame in my soul unites with the Divine Flame. However, the journey has just begun. Now the flames become pilgrims searching the valleys and mountains of the earth for those souls suffering and filled with tears. My soul allows His will to direct the path where the prayer is most needed.

At last there is coalescence between my prayers and the will of God. Prayer and surrender are the sign posts along my way to eternity. At this juncture, my soul at last knows peace.

I no longer struggle with vocal prayer in the Roman Catholic tradition. The Jesus prayer, Noetic prayer, possesses the essence. My soul kneels in the stillness of silence and is consumed with the Divine Flame in the cosmos of Christ.

Dear Harry,

It is apparent to me that it is urgent that I hearken to the imperative dictate of my soul to journey inwards. My vision has diminished considerably, as well as the escalating dizziness, weakness, tremors and lack of focus. From today, until the advent of Fall, I will be trekking in the "Europe": of my soul, i.e., the mountains and valleys, the precipices and deep ravines of the interior landscape. The chords of my soul play the songs of silence and the melody of solitude.

No baggage
will I take
for the journey
but the "walking stick"
of my little "hobo", hope,
cloaked in faith.

I pray that your life finds its coalescence in the joy that the light of Christ shines on those who follow His will and walk in His way.

Love,
Joyce
(Please convey to Mike my retreat dates and ask his pardon and patience.)

July 1, 2017

The cruel anguish
of the moment
crushes my soul.
There are so many ideas
that my mind
wishes still to explore.
I now have the time
and the silence to do so.
However, the incessant tremor
in my hand
thwarts every effort
of my soul.
It is as if my body—
sinew, nerve and muscle,
is a taut piece of wire
that time plucks
and sets into vibration.
Is the music
of my soul then
to be silence?

Silence
as prayer
and prayer
as silence.
..noetic beauty
in the
silence of God.

My Dearest Harry,

The lovingkindness of your words are glittering diamonds in the dark caverns of my soul shining through the shadows of the years.

In the scroll
Of your soul
The calligraphy
Of love
Is now writ.
+++
I want not
To smudge
The "ink"
Of your Joy
With the
Fountain of my
Sorrowful tears.

The towering monumental JPII statue was featured in an EWTN special Mass a few years ago. He, of course, was instrumental in the collapse of Communism. The Russian sculptor is the same one that replicated the statue I have of JP.

The motto of his papacy was "totus tuus" i.e.,"all yours". His Marian episcopacy was a living consecration to St. Louis de Montfort's book on the Blessed Mother.

As the Pope who is the witness to suffering and the truths revealed by the way of the cross, he straddles the dimensions of the human experience, temporally and eternally. His apostolic letter, "On the Meaning of Suffering"(Salfici Dolorus), is well worth pondering.

Thank you for the "arrow" of prayer that pierces to the core of my soul and makes the pain less so.

I have been without hot water since Saturday. The tech is here now installing a new heater. (1,900.00!). Also, my printer was problematic and kept informing me it was "off line". Dom came and "hard wired" it, instead of WiFi connection. He charged me 100.00—for correcting the issue from the initial installation a few weeks ago.

The fleeting moments of my earthly life weigh heavily on my soul. There are so many adventures that beckon me and so little energy to "trek" the paths.

The music of Arvo Paart is a synthesis of sound transformed into spirit. Oh! For moments to savor such sweetness!

Furthermore, I have just discovered that Met. Hilarion Alseyef, an Orthdox theologian that I hold in great reverence, is also an eminent composer/conductor. His St Matthew's Passion, DeProfundis, et al, are exquisite expositions of the soul's kneeling before the absolute wonder and beauty of God. I pray I am granted a few more moments to feast at this banquet.

Finally, the ascetical homilies of St. Isaac the Syrian intensify my soul's yearning to "seek the face of God". I explored the canon of Isaac years ago and now have returned to have him as my companion along the way.

Pain prevents me from these pursuits for any extended period of time. The wail of anguish at my inability to "stay the moment" in a Faustian last gasp ascends and descends in a familiar rhythm of despair.

My body at night has become a symphony of surprises. The jaw tremors in a staccato counterpoint to the rhythmic tremors in the hand. My legs now join in the "concert" and contort into

excruciating knots of dystonia. The rigid neck and torso are outcasts in this grotesque theatrical masquerade. ..dizziness conducts all. The "ticket" is pain. Suffering is the only truth of life and reveals the mystery of God.

Perhaps, God willing, there will be moments to share the special adventure of your European hiatus. I much look forward to witness yournew-found delights.

My hand is now most often frozen in a stubborn paralysis—but today His providence has gifted me with a few moments of reprieve—thus allowing my fingers to move haltingly and ever so slowly over the surface of the keys.

I am grateful for the beauty of your "mystical" presence in these trials "along the way".

May you follow after Him and walk in His way..to light, to love, to peace.

Love

Canticle on Infinity

In
Darkness
Light

Kyrie Eleison

In
Silence
Transfiguration

Christie Eleison

The Skeleton of Time

Silence
Is the
Skeleton
Of
Time.

Enfleshed
In the
Wounds
Of
Christ.

Fratres

In the
Womb
Of
Time,

Pain
Gives birth
To
Joy…

And
Joy
Gives birth
To
Pain…

All is
One
In the
Embrace
Of
Silence.

The Cosmic Screech

In the
Silence
Of
Pain.

The
Soul
Screeches
prayer…

The
Nakedness
Of
Fear…

The
Womb
Of
Christ.

Light Eternal

The
Soul's
Silence
Is the
Stillness
Of
Light
Eternal.

Eclipse

In the
Nuptials
Of the
Cross
Of
Christ…
Time
And
Eternity
Eclipse.

Catastrophe Quotidian

To
Know
The
Destiny
Of
One's
Soul
Would be
Catastrophe
Quotidian.

The Soul's Ink

The Ink
Of
The
Human soul
Is
Writ
In
Tears.

The Loudest Prayer

The
Acceptance
Of
The
Cross
Is
The
Loudest
Prayer
In
The
Ear
Of
God.